



THE RIGHT OF KINGS,

CONTEYNING A DEFENCE OF THEIR SUPREMACY, over all persons, and in all causes, as well ecclesiasticall as civill, within their severall Dominions.

HEREWITHALL IS PROVED BY TESTIMONY of Holy Scripture, That Christian Kings are to haue such Dignity, and execute such Office in the Christian Church, as Gods Kings had and exercised in the Church under the Lawe.

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WHICH PART OF THE MYSTERIE of Gods Will, as it hath been wickedly under Poperie shut up from Men, so it is in our tymes right needfull that the same be opened to all Christian Nations.

Rom. 13. 1.

*Let every soule be subiect,
to the Higher Powers.*

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THE HISTORY OF

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The epistle to the Reader.

WHo that considers the evils done unto the Sonne of God by Kings: Who that considers that most cruel persecution of the Church by Kings in the primitive tymes, & this also for about three hundred yeares of continuance: yea, who that considers the Churches persecution by Kings in these last tymes, wherein our Princes being mis-led by the delusions of the Romane Bishop, haue persecuted them who suffered their faith and service of God, to be instructed and ordered by the word of God: who (I say) that considers these things, would not expect, that the Lord, even our most blessed God, should utterly reject them, denying them any dignity or office in his Church upon earth? But the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings, Righteous beyond our apprehension, and mercifull beyond all expectation, hath contrarywise reveiled from heaven by his word, and wiitnessed unto it with miraculous power, that the Kings among the Nations of the Gentiles, are accepted by him for his Ministers, unto whom, as unto Kings allowed by God, all Christians must be subiect. By how much the lesse therefore their desert hath been, by so much the more is this Grace of God to be magnified: By how much the lesse their desert of this grace hath been, by so much the more are they bound, to attend diligently to the due execution of the will of God. Is it not sufficient, that Kings being mis-lead, partly by Heathenisme before their conversion to Christianity, partly by Poperie after their conversion, haue heretofore bloudily persecuted and slaine those, who haue yeilded obedience to the word of God? Shall the Saints, even to this day also, be butchered by their power? when the Lord is so gracious as to mainteyne the right of Kings, will not they doe

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The epistle to the Reader.

right to the children of God? how long shall a false word mislead the most of them? how long will they be, before they by the light of the word of God discern the Lords sheepe from others? Blessed be God, who hath opened the eyes of many of them, and moved their hearts to be Protectors of his flock. His Flock are those, who, if not fully, yet most neerely conforme their faith, their life and conversation, to the reveiled will of God, as it is preserved in the sacred scriptures. As therefore the Lord is mercifull to Kings, so ought they in duety to Goa, by the word of God in scripture to discern, and discerning to protect the people of the Lord. Much of the Lords people are mislead by Teachers, who teach evilly in some things, and hardly finde we any wholly conformable to the instruction of the Lords word in Scripture; but yet difference is to be put, betweene those who in the greatest part obey the word of the Lord, & those who in the greatest part walk in disobedience. And my hope is, that as by this Treatise I move Gods people, to consider advisedly the great Dignity and Office of Princes, so Princes will be gracions to those, who most neerely Beleerve and live as becommeth Saints. Neyther would I have my Reader here to expect, that I would iudge who or who are lawfully Kings; but only that those who are Kings by the permission and grace of God, may be put in minde of their Dignity and Office in the Church & be also obeyed by those of the Church, as God by his instruction reveiled to the Church gives direction. This is the end of my writing this following Treatise: this the aime of my heart; which having now shoven in this epistle, I think fit to put an end to the same, and to proceed to the Treatise it selfe.

Tours in the Lord,

Thomas Procter.



A TREATISE OF SUPREMACY.

Wherein is proved by testimony of sacred Scripture, that Kings or in dependant civill powers or States, are by Gods Ordinance to be supreame Governours, over all persons, and in all causes, aswell ecclesiasticall as Civill, within their severall Dominions.

THath been of long time, and in too many Nations of Christendome still is, an error of no small importance to think, That Kings are not to judge in things perteyning to the Church of God, nor to order the offices and affaires of the Church, nor to governe over all ecclesiasticall persons, within their severall kingdomes or Dominions. From which errors possessing the mindes, aswell of Princes as of private persons, strange troubles haue arisen to the church of God; both Princes and private persons mistaking their dueties; and so Princes not doing in the church what God appoints them, others, (and even of their subjects) haue been scourges unto them, by practising against them things farre differing from the teaching of Christian Religion. Alas how much innocent bloud haue Princes shed, whilst guided by a false word of the Romane Bishop, they haue neglected to meditate in the word of God, and to Iudge and Governe according to its directions, and so haue butchered the Saints of God in all Nations, and on the contrary haue exalted them who most haue troden under foote, the sacred word and ordinances of the living God. What should therefore be more deare to Princes, then to know the

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dignity and true office, wherein God by his Ordinance hath set them? Or what greater honour can be done them, then when some wicked Bishop would depresse their right herein, God by his word declares his wickedness, and by his strange and mervailous Acts in our times, raiseth his Princes, (will or nill that Bishop, and all his Adherents) to their true dignity and office in the Church? Verily we see in these times, how God tendereth the rights of Christian Princes, when under the Reformation, as he on the one hand hath freed them from the usurpations and bondage of the Romane Bishop, so on the other hand he hath preserved their rights against all, who under any pretences whatsoever, haue indeavoured to deprive them thereof. It is therefore dangerous for any, aswel for Princes as for people, to doe oughts against the will of God, as he hath revealed the same by his word preserved in scripture. True it is, that many are not suffered to be informed hereof, because by such information, that Bishop of Romes delusions, and his insufferable abusions would be discovered. But fitter it is, that Princes know their Right, and people their dueties, then that the consciences of both being misinformed, they be led thereby into the fierce wrath of God, by their doing things contrary to his sacred Minde. The consideration wherof provoked me to the writing of this Treatise, that so I also with others before me, may helpe to satisfie the consciences of men, in this great point of Christian Religion, concerning the Supremacy and government of Kings in the Church upon earth. Thus having shoven you the Aime, Occasion and End of this writing, I will proceed to prove this point, by testimonies of holy scripture; that so, as there is no safer direction for men whatto beleeeve herein, then the directiō of Gods own word, so men may rest satisfied in Conscience, with that which truely is made manifest therefrom.

In the epistle to the Romanes, chap. 13.
verse 1, we thus read;

Let every soule be subiect to the Higher Powers: for there is no power but of God: and the powers that be are ordeyned of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves iudgement. For Princes are not to be feared for good workes but for evill; wilt thou then be without feare of the power? Doe well: so shalt thou haue praise of the same: for he is the Minister of God for thy wealth; But if thou doe evill, feare: for he beareth not the sword for nought: for he is the Minister of God, to take vengeance on him that doth evill. Wherefore ye must be subiect, not because of wrath onely, but also for conscience sake: for for this cause yee pay also Tribute: for they are Gods ministers, applying themselves for the same thinge.

In this portion of scripture given us, as a declaration of the will of God concerning this matter, I wish you to observe;

1. To whom the Apostle giveth this charge concerning subjection.
2. Of what kinde of powers he here speaketh.

Concerning the first of these, we shall doe well to observe; both the direction and also the close of this epistle: for by them will appeare, to whom the Apostle gives this charge concerning subiection. The direction of the epistle, hath (chap. 1. verse 7.) these words: *To all you that be at Rome, beloved of God, called to be Saints, &c.* The Close of the epistle, is, chap. 16. 3. where wee finde a number saluted by name, of whom we may well beleeeve that some were of the Clergy: and this the rather also, because (verse 7.) the Apostle saith, *Salute Andronicus and Iunia, my cosens, and fellow prisoners*

Of Supremacie.

*ners which are notable among the Apostles, & were in Christ before me; for we may well thinke, that they who were notable among the Apostles, were of the Clergy, yea of the chiefe among the Clergy. Moreover, seing this epistle was written in a tyme of good growth of the Christian Church, (for it was written after Paul had been a prisoner, ch. 16.7.) should we think that the Church at Rome, was not at this time provided of Clergy as other Churches then planted were? To conclude, seing the Apostle writeth to the Saints at Rome, it argues he wrote to the Church at Rome; therefore also the charge concerning subiection, is given to All that were then in the Church at Rome. Wherefore unlesse we will be disobedient to this charge of the Apostles: or unlesse we will preferre the now Bishop and Clergy of Rome, to these who were notable even among the Apostles of the Lord, we ought not to exempt the now Clergy of the Church of Rome, frō yeilding submission to the Higher powers. Thus having shoven to whom this charge concerning subiection is given, proceed we to consider, *of what kinde of powers the Apostle here speaketh.**

The kinde of power which the Apostle here speaketh of, is noted and declared unto us by two things: first, by bearing the sword: secondly, By receiving tribute; but in those times Bishops bare not the sword, nor received Tribute, but Kings and independant Civill powers onely did this; therefore the powers wherof the Apostle here speaketh, were not Bishops of the Church, but Kinges, or independant Civill powers. To conclude then, seing the Apostle writing to the Church, cōmands all in the same to be subject to the Higher Powers: and seing by those Higher powers he meanes those who bare the sworde, and received Tribute, that is, the Emperour, Kinges, and other Civill powers; therefore the powers ecclesiasti. all at that time at Rome, were subjected

ted to the Emperour, and to them that bare the sword and received Tribute, that is, Kinges and Sovereigne Princes, It is therefore the manifest will of God, that the powers of Christian Churches, should be subject to Kinges and Sovereigne Civill States, as to the Higher powers by the Ordinance of God: for this Rule of the Apostle here set downe, must be taken for a Rule unto all Christian Churches, and not as serving for the Church of Rome onely, and onely for that present tyme. If it be objected that by this Rule I subject the Sonne of God also to Kings and Princes, I answer, seing the Lord paid tribute, *Math. 17. 24.* and seing the Apostle makes the paying of Tribute, an argument of subjection, *Rom. 13. 6.* therefore there was one part of our Lords Humiliation, that he was made, as inferiour to Angels, *Heb. 2. 7.* so subject to Kinges and Princes. Thus having written of these two things, proceede we now to consider further:

1. The Supremacy of Kinges.
2. Some particulars of their Office here mentioned by the Apostle.

The Supremacy is noted unto us, by the Apostles styling them *The Higher Powers*: for they are called here Higher Powers in respect of the Churches powers and ministrations to which the Apostle wrote. I conclude therefore, that seing the Apostle writing to a Christian Church, commands subjection to some as to Higher powers, therefore of the two powers, (that of the Church, I meane, and that of Princes,) the power of Princes is the Higher by the Ordinance of God. And this is answerable to the Custome of Scripture, which speaking of the two Powers of Kings and Priests, preferreth that of Kings to that of Priests, saying, *Rev. 5. 10.* Kinges and Priests, not Priestes and Kings; Both are powers of great excellence; but in the matter of prefer-

ring powers to powers, ministrations to ministrations, it is fit we follow the Teaching of God, rather then the vaine word of a puffed up Bishop. Lastly, seing the Apostle saith: *let every soule be subject to the Higher Powers*, this plainly proves the Supremacy to be in thole powers: for subjection to any as to the Higher argues Supremacy in the Higher, though every subjection proves not a Supremacie in him to whom an other is subjected; for even Kings are subjected to be obedient to Priestes, when yet they obey not them as Higher then themselves. Thus having written of the Supremacy, proceed we to such particulars of the Kings Office as are here mentioned.

The particulars here mentioned are two, first, *That they are appointed for the wealth of them that doe well*: secondly, *That they are to take vengeance on him that doth evill*. Now then, if they be Gods Ministers to punish him that doth evill, how is any evill doer exempted from this Ministers sword? and if none, then no Bishop doing evill, but is subjected by God to be struck by the sworde of these Higher powers, as Gods Ministers to take vengeance on him for doing evil. Moreover, what is well doing: but the observation of Gods commandement or ordinance? and what is evill doing, but the violation of the same? therefore in asmuch as this Minister is to punish evill, his punishment must stretch unto evill of all kindes, aswell euills of the Church, as euills of the Common wealth, for the Commandements or Ordinances of God stretch to both. If therefore any Teachers teach wholesome doctrine, according to the will of God reveiled, this is to doe well, and such are to be cherished and defended by this Minister of the sworde; but doe any teach false doctrines, contrary to the teaching of Gods will revealed, this is to doe evill, and such Teachers are to be punished by this Minister as evill doers. Againe, doe any ecclesiasticall

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Officers doe the dueties ordeyned by God to their offices, this is well doing, and such Officers are to be cherished and rewarded by this Minister; but doe any neglect the proper duties of their Ministration, giving themselves to doe other things rather, and leaving them to be done by others, this is evill doing in such Officers, and they are to be punished by this Minister. Lastly, doe any Christians, (of what sort, or condition soever) beleve according to the instruction of Gods word; and live in their lives and conversations accordingly, this is well doing, and such are to be cherished and defended by this Minister; but doe any refuse to Beleve according to wholesome doctrine, or to live in life and conversation according to Gods Commandements, this is evill doing, and such are to be punished by this Minister as for evill doers.

Thus having briefly shewed the things most evident in this Scripture, I proceede to a yet further opening of this Scripture unto you.

You see here that Princes whose office properly it is, to beare the sword, and to receive Tribute, are declared by the Apostle to be Gods Ministers: for so the Apostle saith: *He is the Minister of God for thy wealth*, and againe, *He is the Minister of God, to take vengeance on him that doeth evill*. Now Princes bearing the sword, and receiving Tribute, are Kings, or independant powers or States, whom God, (not any Bishop, nor the Church,) ordereth to this independancy or Soueraignty in power; for so the Apostle would haue us to understand when he saith: *there is no power but of God, therefore whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist, shall receive to themselves judgement*. And it is the Apostles strong argument, that because Princes are allowed of by God as for his Ministers, therefore of conscience towards God, & not for feare of wrath onely, we must

be subject. Now then, seeing God gratioſly accepted of the Kings among the Gentiles as for his Miniſters, what miniſtration is approved of in their hands by the Lord but the Kingly? For God accepting of them as Kings, and not as private Perſons onely, he declares himſelf hereby to approve, of their exerciſing upon earth the Kingly Miniſtration: for he that accepts them as for Miniſters allowes in them a miniſtration, and what miniſtration allowes he in Kings but the kingly? Therefore it is a point of Chriſtian faith neceſſary to ſalvation, to belevee of the Soueraigne Kinges and Princes, which the Goſpel found among the Gentiles, that God accepted of them as for his Kings, to ſerve him in the kingly Miniſtration. It was commanded to the Church under the Lawe, Deut. 17. 14. that if it would ſet a King over it, it ſhould not then take liberty to its ſelfe to ſet this or that perſon over its ſelfe, but ſhould waite upon God to ſet him over it whom the Lord ſhould chuſe; for ſo we read there in theſe wordes: *when thou ſhalt come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and ſhalt poſſeſſe it and dwell therein, if thou ſay, I will ſet a King over me, like as all the Nations that are about me, Then thou ſhalt make him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God ſhall chuſe.* It is no ſmall matter therefore to the Church of God to yeild its ſelfe to any as for its King; for if it waite not upon Gods election, it ſurely tranſgreſſeth grievouſly againſt God. Therefore the Chriſtian Church alſo, as it was not (hand over head, at its pleaſure) to ſet Kinges over its ſelfe, ſo it was to acknowledge and obey the Kings and Princes, already reigning over the Nations whereinto it ſtretched, as for kinges already provided for it by the ordering and Ordinance of the Lord. This approving therefore of the kinges and Princes, which the Goſpell found reigning over the Nations of the Gentiles, ſerves as Gods election or choiſe made by him, of who the Church ſhould take and
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acknowledge, as for her kinges and Princes set Over her by Gods providence. They then arose and fell, one subverting another, now the army, now the City, now the Nations, now the Emperors, chusing who should Rule over the Nations here and there, and yet for all this, Gods disposing hand was busy, ordering such to Sovereignty, as he would have to manage the power of the sworde here and there: and the Church was subjected to receive and acknowledge those, whom God permitted to attayne to Sovereignty in this Nation or in that. Princes therefore may by diverse Meanes attayne to Sovereignty, and the Nations may here and there change from one to another as occasion shall be given; but the Church as the Church must not set over its self a kinge or kinges, but must waite upon God, acknowledging them that attayne to the Soueraignty of power here or there. But now, Gods approving of the Kinges, which the Gospell found reigning over the Nations of the Gentiles, as for his Ministers, what followes, but that he approves in them, an exercising the kingly Ministration? And what can be more truely the kingly Ministration, then that which Gods Kings before time allowed by God, exercised in the Church under the Lawe: for where there is no new description of the Ministration, there the same Ministration before approved of by God in his Kinges, serveth for an example of the kingly Ministration.

Wherefore seeing God accepts of Kinges as Kinges for his Ministers, it necessarily followes, that those Kings exercise such Ministration, as with Gods approbation Gods Kinges before tyme exercised. I conclude therefore, that the Kinges or Soueraigne States or Powers among the Gentiles, were now declared by Gods Apostle to have right, to exercise such Ministration, as Gods Kinges exercised with Gods approbation under the Lawe. And you see, that as

under the Lawe, Kings had the Supremacy, and were Gods Ministers, *for the wealth of them that did well, and for the punishment of evill doers*, so the Apostle calls the Kings and Princes among the Gentiles *The Higher powers*, and declares them for Gods Ministers, *for the wealth of them that doe well, and punishment of evill doers*; the likenes therefore in these particulars, argues Gods approving, that they should be like his former Kings in their Ministration. As therefore the church under the Lawe, tooke example for her King frō the Kinges of the Gentile Nations, so God approving of the Kinges among the Gentiles, they are to take example for their Ministration, from that which with Gods approbation Kinges did in the Church under the Lawe. This I press the more, becaule the Pope of Rome admits easely of Kings as of hangmen, to punish the Clergy of the Church for cvill doing, when he shall give up such Clergy to be executed or punished by the sworde; but at no hand will admit, that they should exercise such Ministration, as Gods Kinges with Gods approbation exercised in and over the Church under the Law. This is one of his delusions, this one of his presumptions against the ordinances of God and of Christ, and by this he worketh to the Christian world, not a little mischief. But now, unless the Christian Nations will make the Pope of Rome their Apostle, they ought to beleve concerning this matter, according to the revelation of the will of God by the Apostle Paul; neither shall they be guiltlesse before God; if they beleve the Popes word, the same being diverse from the word of Gods true Apostle. To conclude, seing God approves of Kinges as Kings for his Ministers, they are bound as they will answer it to God, to exercise such kingly Ministration, as with Gods allowance his Kings before time exercised; for seing Christian Religion allowes not, of all things done by Kings among the Gentile Nations whilst they were Infidells,

Infidells, it must needs be, that the Kings of the Gentiles are not to doe all that which they as Infidels did, but such things as with Gods allowance his Kings before time did, so faire forth as Christian Religion permits. This I add here, because of the abolishing of Sacrifices for sinnes, which under the lawe were offered by Kings: as also because that under Gentilisme, Kings were both Kings and Priests, whereas Gods Ordinance under the Christianity, as under the Lawe, permits not this. But now, having proved, that God accepts of the Kings of the Gentiles as Kings for his Ministers: & having shewen you, that there being no new description of that dignity & office, they are to take example for the same frō Gods Kings in the Church under the Law, I thinke fit in the next place to put you in minde of two speciall things:

1. That under the Lawe, the worde of God was given to the King.
2. That it was given to him as to a Iudge.

That the worde of God was given to the King, may appeare by the testimony of our blessed Saviour, who (*Ioh. 10. 35.*) saith: If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God was given, &c. for, though Priests are comprised under the Name of these Gods, yet Kings are not excluded, seing none can deny Kings to be Princes. And here I would haue you to note, that this manner speaking of our Lord, argues a kinde of trust, as if God intrusted the keeping of his word unto Kings and Priests: for when it is sayd that the word is given to them, it implies that God trusteth them with his word. But to this scripture, we may add another, *Deut. 17. 18.* where the charge of God to the Kinge, is given in these wordes, saying: *And when he shall sit upon the throne of his Kingdome, then shall he write him this Lawe, repeated in a booke*

by the Priests of the Levites. And it shalbe with him, and he shall reade therein all the dayes of his life, that he may learne to feare the Lord his God, and to keepe all the words of this Lawe, and these Ordinances for to doe them. That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turne not from the Commandement, to the right hand or to the left. Here observe, first, That not what the Priest will deliver for Lawe, but the Lawe its selfe, *This Lawe* he hath right, yea and charge also from God to take: Secondly, that this Lawe is given to him as to a King, therefore as to a Minister, and not as to a private Person; therefore also it is not given him for his private direction onely, what to beleieve and doe for his owne salvation, but it is given him for a direction of his Ministration: for what is given to an Officer as an officer, is given for a direction what to doe in his office. Therefore Kings haue a charge of Gods word aswell as Priests, and they are to be directed by it in their Ministration; so that they may not content themselves to say, I doe this and this in my Office, by the teaching of the Priests, but they must reade and meditate in the word its selfe of God, by it to be instructed what to doe. There is difference to be put, betweene the Minister revealing primarily the word of God, and the Minister of the word already reveiled; of the first, the greatest Kinges are subjected to receive the word as they deliver it; but the word once so delivered, the King is to take it, and to reade and meditate in it, and is not bounde to take onely the interpretation or word of him, who is but the Minister of the word already reveiled. Therefore also the King is interposed, betweene God, and the Minister of the worde already reveiled, as having right to take the word its selfe reveiled, and not whatsoever the Minister of the worde already reveiled, will deliver as for that word. Would God that Christian Princes did duely consider, this gracious goodnes,

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and mervailous favour of God towards them; for if they duly considered this, it would much provoke them to reade themselves the revealed word of God, and not to leave this to the reading of Priests onely. How will they answer it to God, if being Kings, as by Gods ordination, they neglect this charge given by God to his Kings? Ah the evils which the false word of an evill Priest hath brought upon them, through their neglecting themselves to read the word of God in Scripture. But now, as I have before proved, that Gods accepting of the Kings of the Gentiles, as kings for his Ministers, serves both as for Gods gracious election made of them, and also as for a warrant, that they should serve God in the kings ministrations, approved of by God in the hands of his kings under the law, so it may now appeare unto them, that the charge of God given to his kings in the Church under the Law, serves also for a charge unto them. And seeing this charge is given to the kinge as kinge, it proves, that his charge is, that he see all the ordinances of God observed by all: for this use of this charge, made the good kings in the Church under the law, as their manifold actions, both in restoring true Doctrine, and ordering the Priests and Levites to their severall offices, as also in ordering the divine service, and other like, plentifully declare. What therefore God hath commanded or ordayned, whether for matter of faith necessarie to salvation to be beleevd, or for matter of Ecclesiasticall government, or the like, that is the King to see done, as well by Priests as People, and to punish the negligent for euil doers, as well Priests as others. Thus having written of the first things, proceed we to the second.

That Gods word is given to the King, as to a Iudge, and not as to one who must doe after the judgement of the Priest onely, may appeare *Psalm. 82. 1.* where we thus reade:

He iudgeth among Gods : How long will ye iudge uniuſly, and accept the perſons of the wicked ? Doe right to the poore and fatherleſſe : doe iuſtice to the poore and needie : ſave them from the hands of the wicked. Here you ſee, that Princes of whom our Lord teſtifies (as before I have ſhewen) that they are called Gods, are alſo Iudges ; therefore the word given to them, is given to them as Iudges. And whereby then ſhould they be directed in their iudging, if not by the word given by God unto them ? The Pope of Rome would have them to reward the good, & puniſh euill doers, after he and his Cleargy hath judged them good or euill ; but they are not to bee directed by an others judgment, ſeeing God hath made them Iudges, and given them his word to direct their iudgement. As therefore their office ſtretcheth, to reforme Doctrines, to order Eccleſiaſticall Officers, to ſee to their executing their offices according to Gods ordinance, to order the Divine worſhip, and to cauſe people to live as Gods word commandeth, (for all this did the good Kings in the Church under the Law) ſo they are to Iudge alſo in all theſe things, what is to be done, what not : what well, what euilly done. If any will ſay, that now I ſow the ſeeds of grievous tribulation to Gods Church, ſeeing I make Kings or Princes (who are apt to maintain every conceipt of theirs by the ſword) Iudges of Doctrines, Eccleſiaſticall offices, ordering Divine Service, and of Manners, then I anſwer : If the Apoſtle taught this Doctrines of them, implied in his declaring that God accepted them for his miniſters, even whiſt as yet they were Infidels, & would not be directed by the word of God, ſhould we deny Kings this power and office when they are Chriſtians ? Therefore let us in theſe dayes, as the Apoſtle in thoſe, acknowledge unto Princes their Right and Power, yea though they execute not their Miniſtery rightly, but perſecute rather the Saints and Church of God : for it becometh

meth Christians to acknowledge their right, yea when they do not according to right, but are rather enemies as yet, and persecutors. Let us feare even then to doe evill, because if even then they punish us for evill, their punishment is Gods, seeing they are the Ministers of God. But if wee suffer for well doing (they being negligent to read the word, or to judge us by it) let us take to us the comfort of the Apostle Peter, where 1. Pet. 2-20. he sayth, *If when ye doe well, ye suffer wrong, and take it patiently, this is acceptable to God.* This gracious consolation against the afflictions layd vpon us, by misguided, or mis-judging Princes, should bee our refuge, as it was the refuge of Gods Saints in those times of the Apostles. Yet here I think fit to put men in minde, that wherein Gods word preserved doth not speak for us, there, we who suffer, beare our owne burthen and hurt: for wee ought to preferre the judgement of Gods Iudges before ours, though we preferre justly Gods word it selfe to their erring in the use made of it. For Gods word which is plaine, or indeed truely collected, let us suffer, if our Kings, erring, will persecute us for our faith, and ordering of things according thereto; but let us not suffer for maintenance of our owne judgment onely, opposed to the iudgement of Gods Minister. True it is, that Kings and Princes may, and in fact have erred, and this also in things wherein they think themselves free, to doe with their owne what they will; therefore Princes may doe well in such things, to admit of wholesome counsell, rather then to goe on in doing evill through error. Some Princes thinking themselves free, to Honour Priests as they will, have in way of honour to them, left all iudging of Doctrines of faith, and all ordering of Ecclesiasticall matters to them onely, not daring to bee themselves Iudges in these things; but such honouring is not acceptable to God, seeing themselves neglect the office of Iudging, which God

hath intrusted to them as well as to Priests. Others have in way of Honour freed the Cleargie from being subiect to be judged and punished by themselves, unlesse by the Pope, or other chiefe among the Cleargie, they bee given up to the secular power; but this kind of honouring also is evill, inasmuch as Princes exercise not that power and authoritie to judge and punish the Cleargie for evill doing, as Gods Kings in the Church under the Law did. Others againe, by way of honour to Priests, have imployed them so in civill Courts of Iustice, as that they have not, yea have not been able thenceforth to performe the true duties of the Bishops office, but have left the same to the performance of others substituted under them; but this kinde of honouring also is evill, inasmuch as Gods Ministers of his word, who should be diligent Preachers of the same, content themselves to busie themselves in civill judgements, and to preach the word once in a Lent time onely, or upon some solemne time onely. Others againe, as for a greater honour to Bishops, have made them Ministers of the Sword; but God having appointed Kings for the ministration of the Sword, the other Ministers must not be ministers thereof: for God having put a difference between Ordinance and Ordinance, Office and Office, Power and power, appointing one to one Minister, the other to another Minister, what is it but a confusion, and an inversion of the ordinance of God, to make one Minister Minister of both? It hath been an evill collection made by some, that what Gods Priests under the Law did, that the Ministers of the Gospell may doe, even as Kings under the Gospell may doe what Gods Kings under the Law did: for the Ordinance of God concerning the Ministers under the gospell, permits us not to make such collection concerning Priests and their imployment and actions. In all these things Princes have erred, and easily may againe erre, to the great hurt

hurt of the Church of God, and inversion of his holy Ordinances; therefore if they suffer wholesome advice & counsel in such things, they shall the better please God by a true ministration of their office. Surely whatsoever Princes doe to Bishops or Priests, which necessarily occasions their not doing the proper Duties of their Episcopall or Priestly Ministration, or which occasions their over seldome or negligent doing the same, that is ill done by Princes, and God will visit them, both for drawing his Ministers of the word, from performing their proper duties of such Ministration, and also for suffering unpunished any such omission, or neglect of these duties. These things I thought good here to touch at, because it might occasion our Princes, to hold Gods Priests to the duties proper to their Ministration, and to punish in them any omission, or over negligent performance of the same. But now to conclude this poynt, Princes are not barely as executioners, to reward the good, and punish evill doers, but they are constituted also Judges by the Lord, that they also may iudge in all things, to which the word already revealed from God, stretcheth. And verily, even the Ministers of the word already revealed, are, preaching the same to them, to preach as to Gods Judges of doctrine preached. Not that they are all alike capable of iudgement in such things, but that this is the right of their office, which also for conscience towards God, must be had in Reverence.

Thus have I proved, that Kings under the Gospell, are to exercise such Dignitie and Ministration, as, with Gods blessed approbation, we find in Scripture, that Gods Kings exercised under the Law. As therefore under the Law, the King was over the Church in the Nation of the Iewes, as *Moses* sayd, *If thou say I wil set a King over mee, &c.* (which manner Supremacie, the Kings under the Law did in fact exercise and hold): And as under the Law the Kings did not

onely reward the good, and punish the evil, but did also Iudge of good and evil by the direction of the word given him, restoring pure Doctrine, and setting the Priests and Levites to their due offices, and ordering the Divine Service; so are the Kings under the Gospell likewise to doe, being over the Church in their severall Dominions, and iudging of what is good and evil by the word of God in Scripture, and restoring Religion, setting the Cleargy to their due offices, and ordering the Divine Service in the Church. Wherin, though they are not to neglect, not the advice onely, but authority also of the Bishops and Priests, yet they are not to take for their direction, whatsoever they shall advise and presse, but they ought themselves to read and meditate in the word of God, and to judge by it, of that advised and urged by the Bishops. These things concerning the Supremacy and Government of Kings, I have here pressed upon the observation of Princes, partly to stirre them up to mind their owne Authority in the Church, partly to instruct all Christian Subiects, what to beleieve concerning their dutie toward Princes; but now having this done, I think it fit to answer in the next place, one or two obiections, which either are, or may peradventure be made, against this which formerly I have written.

The first Obiection.

Against the Supremacy of Kings, and their judging in all causes, and governing over all persons within their severall Dominions, it commonly heretofore hath been, and to this day is alleadged. That our Lord committed unto *Peter*, to be continued in his Successors, the Supream viciariate power of governing the Church for ever. This opinion they fortifie partly by Scripture, partly by Tradition,
partly

partly by the sayings of Doctors of great authoritie in the Church. The Scriptures which they commonly make use of, are, first, *Math. 16. 18.* where the Lord sayd thus unto Peter, *I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not overcome it.* Secondly, *Iohn 21. 15.* where againe the Lord sayd thus unto the same Apostle: *Simon the sonne of Iona, lovest thou mee? He sayd unto Him, Yea Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee. Hee sayd unto him, Feed my Lambs.* He sayd unto him againe the second time, *Simon the sonne of Iona, lovest thou mee? he sayd unto Him, Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.* He sayd unto him, *Feed my Sheepe.* Hee sayd unto him the third time, *Simon the sonne of Iona, lovest thou me? Peter was sorie because he sayd unto him the third time, lovest thou me? and he sayd unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* Iesus sayd unto him, *Feed my Sheep.* From both these Scriptures they collect, that the Apostle Peter should feed all the Lords sheep for ever, both with Doctrine and Government; therefore all the Lords sheep, must receive from this Apostle their Doctrine and Powers, or Offices, that so they may be built upon the Rock of this Apostles approbation or allowance. And because the Apostle was to doe this for ever, therefore after his death this must bee done by his Successors, the Popes of Rome. Hence it is that they seekè the Popes approbation of all Doctrines, and receive their Episcopall authoritie from him, yea Kings also receive kingdomes of him. But now I will in the next place discover the fallacy of this collection, shewing that these Scriptures are not so to be understood, neither do intend any such matter. And I think fit to write first of the latter Scripture, because the false use made thereof being discovered, it will the more easily appeare, that they make a false use of the first Scripture also.

If from the Lords words in saying to Peter, *Feed my Lambs,*
feed

feed my sheep, it be collected, that *Peter* must feed all Christs sheep, and this also both with Doctrine and Government, then it followes, that the rest of the Apostles, as well as any other, must be thus fed by *Peter*, seeing they also are a part of the Lords sheep; but seeing feeding is taken in matter of Doctrine, for the receiving of doctrine from him, or grounded upon the authoritie of his approbation: and seeing feeding in matter of Government, is taken for a bearing rule over all Christs sheep, and that all Powers or Offices Ecclesiasticall and civill, are to be derived from him, or grounded upon the authoritie of his approbation; therefore I am to prove by testimonies of holy Scripture, that we are not thus to understand the Lord in this speech of his. For matter of Doctrine, it is well knowen, that the rest of the Apostles received not their Doctrine from *Peter*, but from the Lord Christ, even as *Peter* himselfe did; neither were they to ground or build that upon the authoritie of *Peters* approbation, which they received immediatly from the Lord; therefore I conclude, that the rest of the Apostles were not fed by *Peter* in matter of Doctrine. Moreover, the Apostle *Paul*, *Galat. 1. 11.* testifies, saying: *I certifie you brethren, that the Gospell which was preached of me, was not after man, for neither received I it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Iesus Christ.* By this testimonie it is plaine, that the Apostle *Peter* fed not the Apostle *Paul* with Doctrine, but rather the Apostle *Paul* purposely provides, that none should conceive him to have received his Doctrine of Man, or by Man. And as for building upon the Apostle *Peters* allowance or approbation of his Doctrine, it were verily absurd, that the Apostle *Paul* should build or ground himselfe for his Doctrine, upon *Peters* allowance thereof, or the authoritie of such allowance, when he received his Doctrine from the Lord himselfe: for it were truly absurd to seek an A-

postles

postles allowance, and to build upon the authoritie of such allowance, for that received immediately from the Lord of the Apostles. So likewise the Churches who received the doctrine of the Apostle Paule, inasmuch as they beleevd that he received it not of Peter, but of Christ, how sought they eyther, or how built they, upon the authority of the Apostle Peters approbation? There was indeed an approbation, *Gal. 2. 7.* but not a building upon such approbation, seeing the Apostle had a higher warrant and authority for his doctrine. Lastly, seeing it is very apparant, *Mark 3. 14.* that our Lord himself chose the Apostles, and authorised the to the Apostolicall Ministrations: & seeing the Apostle Paul, *Gal. 1. 1.* sayth: *Paul an Apostle, not of Men, neyther by Man, but by Iesus Christ*; therefore who received not their Ministration from Peter, how should they receive from him the Doctrine wherof they were Apostolicall Ministers? I conclude therefore, that all the Apostles were not fed with doctrine by Peter, & consequently that Apostle was not to feed all the Lords sheepe with matter of doctrine. And as for feeding them with Government, by exercising a supream Rule over them, this also appeares to be a false collectiō, frō this Scripture, inasmuch as we finde that our Lord expressly forbadd unto his Apostles, any one of them to rule over the rest. For, *Mark 10. 42.* our Lord sayd thus unto the Apostles: *ye know that they which delight to beare rule among the Gentiles, have Domination over them, and they that be great among them, exercise authority over them; But it shall not be so among you.* By which scripture appeareth manifestly, that how ever every one of the Apostles, was to governe and exercise authority over others, yet none of them was to governe or exercise Authoritie over the rest of the company of the Apostles. It must needs therefore be a false, and very pernicious interpretation or collection, to affirme, that the

Apostle Peter was made Governour, to exercise authority over all Christs sheepe, for then he was to governe and exercise authority over the rest of the Apostles, which thing the Lord expressly forbadd. Now, if the generality hold not in the Apostles, how can it hold in all Christs sheepe for ever? If Peter exercised not such universall government and authority over all Christs Sheepe, why under the pretence of this speech of the Lords, should he govern and exercise authority over all Kings? And indeed, if a man having already diverse Shepherds, say to one of them, feede my Sheep, should that one Shepherd gather hereupō, that now he hath the charge of All his Masters sheepe? Why should he not rather understand this, of some portion of sheepe onely, which his Master would surely allot out to his particular charge: for he might well thiak with himself, that where many shepherds are already appointed, there all the sheepe shall not be committed to one onely. Verily, that Apostles excellencie, even among the very Apostles themselves, was such, & such will be acknowledged by all good Christians for ever, that it needs not to be helped with unsound and false interpretations of, and collections from holy scripture. Thus having discovered the false use made of the latter of the two scriptures, proceede we to the first scripture. As for the first scripture, from whence some would collect, that all doctrine must be received from Peter, and all power or offices, or at least wise must be authorised by the authority of his allowance or approbation, that so they may be built upon the Rock, which Christ hath given to be a Rock whereon he will build his Church, this collectiō appeares to be a false use of this scripture, in asmuch as the rest of the Apostles received not their doctrine, nor Power of Apostleship from the Apostle Peter, but from Christ himselfe, but what they received from the Lord himself, it were absurd to seeke to build it upon the

Authority

Authority of Peters allowance or approbation. The Apostle Paul (as I have before noted) speaking of the power of his Apostleship, saith, *Paul an Apostle, not of men, neyther by man, but by Iesus Christ*; why sayd he this, but to teach us, that we ought not to beleeve, that he was such by vertue of the allowance or approbation of any man whatsoever. And whilst the Apostolicall power was neither received from Peter, nor built nor grounded upon the Authority of his permission, approbation or allowance, why should this be required of Kings and Princes? These scriptures therefore what ever they intend, yet this which Papists collect, may not be Beleeved to be the thing which they intend, for you see, that that which is collected from them by Papists, is directly contrary to a most plaine commandement of our Lord to his Apostles; and to the testimony of the Apostle Paul. Thus having by testimony of severall scriptures, confuted these collectiōs made by some from these scriptures, I think it sufficient to oppose, both against tradition, and also against the greatest Fathers or Bishops, this testimony of holy scripture, by which is proved, that the rest of the Apostles were not fed by the Apostle Peter in matter of doctrine, and that he was not to exercise authority or rule over them.

But if the scripture thus witness, that the Apostle Peter himself might not lawfully claime, this supreme governmēt or rule over the rest of the Apostles, nor consequently over all Christs Sheep, how much lesse lawfully then may his Successor claime this? For, as no Apostle could make another man an Apostle, so no successor could be made an Apostle by the Apostle Peter; and not being so much as an Apostle, how should he claime the chiefest singularity of the Apostle Peter? And that no Apostle could make an Apostle, I gather from the Apostle Paul, who (*Gal. 1. 1.*) saith: *Paul an Apostle, not of Men, neyther by Man, but by Iesus Christ;*

Christ; for this argues, that an Apostle, should not be of Men, neyther by Man, but by Iesus Christ. I conclude therefrom, that no Successor could be in all things like the Apostle to whom he succeedeth, and much less then in those things, by which (if by any thing) the Apostle Peter was preferred unto the rest of the Apostles. If the successor haue conferred upon him, all the gifts and prerogatives of an Apostle, what is he then but an Apostle? But such gifts and prerogatives as by which Apostles, were Apostles, could not be giuen by men, but by Christ onely; therefore the Apostle Peter neyther might nor could conferre upon his Successor all the power, office, prerogatives or dignitie, which himself as an Apostle had received of the Lord Christ. Moreover, seeing the Lords Apostles were the Lords governours, set over the rest of the ecclesiasticall Governours of the Church, how unfit were it to conceive, that the Successour onely of an Apostle, should be Governour over any Apostle? But some are of opinion, that the Apostle Iohn remained long after the death of the Apostle Peter; if therefore the successor of Peter, haue a Vicariate power to governe and rule over all Christs Sheepe, then must he be this to the Apostle Iohn; but what manner unsufferable ambition this favours of, I leave to the judgement of all men. Let us therefore rather beleeve that if the Apostle Peter, appointed his successor, then yet he conferred not upon him, neyther all the gifts by which himself was an Apostle, nor all the power Ministeriall, nor dignity, which as being an Apostle, and one of the chiefe among the Apostles, he held and injoyed in the Church of Christ; but onely, (as Paul upon Timothie and Titus) he conferred a portion of power and charge, such as a Successour might be capable of. To conclude, seeing no Apostle could conferr upon an other man, all the gifts, offices, and dignity, which himself injoyed as an Apostle, there-
fore

fore the successor must be a Minister of a farr inferiour rank, dignity, and charge of Government in the Church, then was the Apostle Peter himselfe. Now then, why should not such a Minister, though he be successeur to that Apostle, subject himself to the supreme government of Gods Kinges, so witnessed unto by holy scripture as before I have shoven? Thus having answered this objection, let us proceed to an other.

The second Obiection.

SOME peradventure may object, saying: The Kingdome of heaven comming in among the Gentiles by Apostles and Bishops, it were a subiecting the Kingdome of Heaven to the powers of this world, if we maintayn not the supreme Government to remaine in Bishops, and specially in the Apostle Peters successeur. If any should thus object, then I answer: the kingdome of heaven comprehending all power, (as the Lord sayd, *Math. 28.18. All power is given me in heaven, and in earth*) the power Apostolicall and Episcopall, must not be taken for the Kingdome of heaven, as if the kingdom of heaven had in it none other powers then it. But you see that I haue shoven before, that there are the powers of Kings in the earth, which it pleased God to allow and confirm, accepting graciously also of them as for his Ministers. Now, though in God the fountaine of power, all power is alike as water in a fountaine, yet in distributing of that Power into Ministeriall Streames, the Lord may ordeyne which parte to which shalbe subordinate; therefore seeing afore I haue shoven, that the Apostle Paul calls the Ministers of the sword The Higher Powers: and seeing I haue before proved, that these powers are allowed by God as for his Ministers, and consequently are to exercise such dignity and office in the

Church, as Gods Kings exercised in the Church under the Lawe: And lastly, seeing all the scripture shewes, that those Kings were over all the Church, exercising a supreme government over all ecclesiasticall persons; therefore (I say) it is no subjecting of the kingdome of heaven to the powers of this world, to subject the Bishops of the Church, to Gods Kings and Sovereigne States. Bishops are Ministers of the kingdome of heaven, but they are not all the Ministers thereof, for Kings also are declared by the Gospell to be Ministers of the same, seeing God hath declared himself to accept of them as for his Ministers; therefore, to subiect one kinde of officer of a kingdome to an other officer, is not to subiect the kingdome to an other kingdome. Bishops preach the word to thele to subdue them to Christ; but being subdued by the word ministred, Bishops may not say, *The kingdomes of this world are ours, and we will dispose of them;* but they must say, as Rev. 11. 15. *The kingdomes of this world are our Lordes and his Christs, and he shall reigne for evermore.* True it is that even the greatest Kinges are comprehended in that comādemēt, Heb. 13. 17. where it is sayd: *Obeȳ them that haue the Oversight of you, and submit your selues, for they watch for your soules, as they that must giue accompts, that they may doe it with ioy, not with griefe: for that is unprofitable for you.* Therefore even the greatest Princes are subiected by Christian religiō unto spirituall Pastors, in the things wherof they are Ministers; but this may be, without Bishops having the Supreme government. For, as a Lord of greatest authority in a kingdome, must obey to every the meanest Constable of a kingdome, within his precinct of charge, & in that wherein such Cōstable is indued with power & authority from the King, when yet this makes not such Lord to lose his superiority, which in the kingdome he hath over such Constable; so is it between a King and a Bishop. God hath declared the Kings
of

of the Gentiles for his Ministers, therefore as Kings were to Priests under the Lawe, so must they be to Bishops under the Gospell: and on the contrary, as Priests were to Kings under the Lawe, so may Bishops be to Kings under the Gospell. The King under the Lawe left the Priestly power and ministraton to the Priest, & was obedient in all things, when yet he ceased not hereby to be governour over the Priests, even so are Kings to doe under the Gospell. The King that must submit himself, to heare the Gospell preached by the Bishop, to receive of his hand Gods Sacraments, to use him as Gods Priest to pray for him, and other like, yet is such a Minister for God over such Priest, as that such Priest preaching false doctrine, or ministring the sacraments otherwise then according to Gods institution, or doing any thing otherwise then as Gods word in scripture prescribes, in stead of obeying such Priest, he is over him to take vengeance on him in Gods stead as for an evill doer. So likewise the King that doing evill, is subiected to the Priests proceeding against evill doers, whether it be to discipline of humiliation or shaming, to sequestration, or excommunication, is yet such a Minister for God over the Priest, that the Priest doing this upon uniuert cause, or pressing unjust ends or effects of such discipline, the King in stead of obeying, must punish such Priest as for an evill doer. The Pope is one of these wicked Priests, for even for obedience to the true word of God, and for ordering things according to its direction, he useth the sword of the Church against men, yea against Kings: and not onely so, but having excommunicated any, he teacheth, that subiects should not acknowledge nor obey their excommunicate Kings, childre their excommunicate Parents, nor wives their excommunicate husbands, and the like; but with what peace of conscience shall a man break Gods word, to doe according to this word.

word of the Popes: Excommunication indeed changeth condition in the Excommunicate, but not in this measure, nor to this effect, for then we must not doe as the scripture commands, in obeying the King, Honouring our parents, and yeelding one to another due benevolence. And truly of all the wicked Priests that ever were in the Church, the Pope of Rome is the wickedest, changing Gods Ordinance, and the effects of Ecclesiasticall Discipline so, that it is a wonder that he is suffred; sure I am, Gods Kings shall answer for it to God, if they as Gods Ministers take not vengeance for God upon him for this. Thus having answered this Objection also, I will now conclude this Treatise with an exhortation to subjects.

An Exhortation to Subjects.

SEeing God reveiling his will by his Apostle, declares himself to accept graciously of the Kings and Princes already among the Gentiles, as Kings and Princes already provided for the Church among the Gentiles, and confirmed as ordained by him: And seeing Kings, being so accepted of & confirmed, are to take example for their regall dignity and Government, frō the approved of dignity and government, of Gods Kings in the Church under the Lawe; therefore it becometh all men to yeild them due subjection, obeying the willingly as Gods Ministers, in all things wherein wee finde Gods Kings under the Lawe obeyed with the Lords approbation. As under the Lawe therefore, Kings were over the Priests, exercising Authority over them, both in setting them to their due Offices if they neglected them: and also in punishing them for evill doing, 1. Chron. 2. 26. so if Kings in the Christian Church doe likewise, Christiā people ought to acknowledge, that the King is by Gods ordinance thus

to doe. Again, if Christian Kings take care of doctrine also, seeing to it that Bishops and Teachers teach according to Gods word: or if they order the divine service, according to the wil of God reveiled in his word: and in a word, if they see the Ordinance of God observed, aswell in ecclesiasticall as civill affaires, punishing also aswell the Cleargy as others offending, we ought to acknowledge, that the King is by Gods ordinance such a Minister, as hath right to use this Ministration in the Church of God within his owne dominions. Let not men being led away of that Romish delusion, by which Kings are debarred from exercising in the Church, the dignity & Office of Gods Kings in the Church under the Law, disobey their Princes in their using their authority in these things, seeing in all these things the Scriptures witness, that Gods Kings under the Law exercised their authority; but rather let men with comfort of conscience, acknowledge this Supream dignity and office in Kings, that so they be not found resisters of the Ordinance of God. If any say, should we not make conscience of things as our Teachers teach us? then I answer: That if you by evill Teachers be led to doe evill, in disobeying the lawfull things done by your Kings, it will not serve for defence of the evill to say, your Teachers taught you so; for, by what meanes soever you doe evil, the King is Gods Minister to punish you for evill doing. You must beware therefore of false Teachers, that you be not led by them as their Disciples into errour, *Act. 20. 30.* And you have a charge given you by the Apostle, *2 Thes. 2. 15.* that you be not moved by any from that which in Scripture is received from the Apostles. Remember how the Apostle Peter, *1 Pet. 4. 15.* exhorts you, saying: *Let none of you suffer as an evill doer.* But, are you not evill doers, if you deny your Kings such Dignity and Office, as God by his word hath conferred upon them? If therefore your King see to the Re-

forming of Religion, according to the instruction of Gods word: and see the word to be purely preached and the sacraments rightly administred unto you, are not you evill doers, and resisters of Gods Ordinance; if you will not come to the word so administred, nor partake of the Sacraments rightly ordered? What would you thinke of those in Iudah and Israell, who when Hezekiah or Iosiah, or Iehoshaphat, restored pure religion, by the instruction of the Lawe preserved in scripture: or tooke away offensive things: or ordered the Preists and Levites to their due ministratiō, or the like, would not then be obedient in such Reformation? were they not evill doers think you? were they not worthy to be punished by the King for evill doers? As you therefore would not fall into the like error, and danger, so ought you to obey unto the Reformation of doctrine and of the Church, confirmed by Gods Minister the King, so long as by the word of God, you cannot prove any thing taught, or done, to be against the reveiled will of God. Think not to plead your conscience, seeing that your conscience ought to admit of Information; and there hath now long time of information passed, wherein you ought to haue beene instructed by the Truth. Neither thinke, that the sword must of duty stay, till the worde haue prevailed to convert you: for the Minister of the sword must punish you for evill doing, and is not bound (save in shewing mercy for a tyme) to stay his hand, till you obey the word, and convert from your errour. One Minister cannot warrant you against an other, the Priest against the King, nor the King against the Priest, because God hath subiected you to obey unto both of these; therefore nothing but the true word of God its selfe, will serve to be alleaged for your disobeying of eyther. If therefore you neglect your selfe to reade, or heare read unto you the worde of God in scripture, by which Meanes also you might come to know it:

Or,

Or, if you, when your Bishop or Priest, declares plainly the word of God out of the Scripture unto you, you then will follow an other Priest, who shewes you not plainly the word of God for that which hee teacheth you, so following his word, be it right or wrong, not caring to know the worde of God, then goe you a wrong course, and as neglecters of the word of God, are ready for that judgement, 2 Thes. 2. 10, of being *giuen up to a strong delusion, that you should beleeeve lies*. And truly, a very strong delusion hath the Popes pretended Supream Vicarship been, leading thousands into error, and producing in some very pernicious effects. But now, seeing I haue shoven you by the word of God, that such Generall and Supream Vicarship, is contrary to the expresse teaching of the word of God in holy Scripture, make conscience henceforth, to hearken to the word of God, and to be guided by it in your faith, that so, obeying the Truth, you may be saved with the children of Truth.

